



## MDA News Digest September 2013



### In This Issue

[Maryland Farm & Harvest](#)

[Headlines from MDA](#)

[Facebook Highlights](#)

[MDA in Pictures & Video](#)

[MDA on Social Media](#)

### A Message from Secretary Buddy Hance

Greetings,

This week we wrapped up our discussions with agricultural and environmental representatives about the new Phosphorous Management Tool and how it can best be implemented. I believe that the revised proposal addresses their concerns. We are committed to both doing our part to restore the Chesapeake Bay while ensuring our farmers have the resources they need to comply with new regulations. For more information, [read our press release](#).



*Secretary Hance*

The 132nd [Maryland State Fair](#) ended last weekend. We appreciate the Governor and Lt. Governor joining us for Ag Day! [Read more](#). MDA was in the Farm & Garden building for all 11 days and enjoyed meeting so many residents and families who came by to talk about agriculture. My thanks to all of the MDA staff members who pitched in to make it another great Fair.

On Sept. 23, our [Farm to School Program](#) will launch the sixth annual Maryland Home Grown School Lunch Week. Students in hundreds of public schools across the state will get a taste of fresh, Maryland-grown and produced food in their school lunches. Be sure to ask your child's school what's local on the menu.

I was recently asked to contribute a regular column

to *Lancaster Farming*, a newspaper that covers the Mid-Atlantic region's agriculture industry. I submitted my first column on Aug. 17. It has been reprinted on the MDA blog. [Read it here](#).

### Special Announcement!

Maryland Public Television will air a new 13-part series on Maryland agriculture on Tuesday, Nov. 19, at 7:00 p.m. Episodes will repeat Thursdays at 11:30 p.m., Sundays at 6:00 a.m., and Fridays at 6:00 p.m. on MPT2. The program will run for 13 weeks, rest for 13 weeks, repeat for 13 weeks. We hope to premiere the second season in November 2014. [Watch a YouTube clip here](#).



### Headlines from MDA

*Below are some of the news release MDA recently distributed.*

MDA has concluded its discussions with key stakeholders to clarify and fine tune how the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) regulations will work and how they will be applied. In addition, MDA agreed to hold briefings to inform farmers of the new proposal prior to the 30-day public comment period, which begins with publication in the Maryland Register.

[Board of Public Works Approves Easement Purchases of 3,918 Acres of Farmland; State and Local Combine for \\$16.9 Million Investment](#) - (Sept 4)

The Board of Public Works recently approved the purchase of 31 easements protecting 3,918 acres of prime Maryland farmland in 17 counties for approximately \$16.9 million in State and local funding. This approval brings the total farmland protected in perpetuity by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) to 289,717 acres. [For more information](#).

[MDA Raises Cost-Share Caps for Dairy Manure Transport; Local Soil Conservation Districts Now Accepting Grant Applications](#) (Sept. 4) - The cost-share funding caps have been raised



Secretary Buddy Hance (3rd from right) and Deputy Secretary Mary Ellen Setting (left) along with Ag Royalty visit with the Pesticide Regulation Staff during the State Fair.

for qualifying dairy and other non-poultry producers who transport manure within their own operations or to other farms where the manure can be used safely and in compliance with a current nutrient management plan. Effective immediately, qualifying farmers may receive up to \$15,000 per season or \$30,000 per year in cost-share assistance to transport manure. The current limit for individual farms is \$7,500 per year. [For more information.](#)

[Cost-Share Grants for Manure Incorporation and Injection Now Available from MDA; Sign-Up Ongoing at Local Soil Conservation Districts.](#) (Aug. 22) – Financial assistance is now available to help farmers cover the cost of injecting or incorporating manure, sludge, food waste and other organic products into cropland. Governor Martin O'Malley has earmarked \$2 million in cost-share funds to help farmers implement the new requirements of Maryland's recently revised nutrient management regulations. [For more information.](#)

[Eastern Equine Encephalitis Confirmed in Maryland Horse; Marylanders Urged to Take Precautions; Horse Owners Encouraged to Vaccinate](#) (Aug. 16) – A case of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) has been confirmed in a horse in Worcester County. The horse tested positive for EEE which, like West Nile virus, is spread by mosquitoes. Officials remind Marylanders to take precautions to protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites to prevent mosquito-borne diseases. [For more information.](#)

[Champion Standardbreds Receive August Touch of Class Award; Harness drivers also honored with Secretary's Citations](#) (Aug. 15) - A family of champion Standardbred racehorses and breeding stock, owned by Joe Thomson of Winbak Farm in Chesapeake City (Cecil County), were presented with the Maryland Horse Industry Board's (MHIB) August Touch of Class Award on this month during the evening race card at the Casino at Ocean Downs in Berlin. [For more information.](#)

[Lt. Governor Brown and Ag Secretary Hance Visit Berlin Creamery on Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail](#) (Aug. 13) – In celebration of Maryland's ice cream trail, Lt. Governor Anthony Brown and Maryland Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance visited Chesapeake Bay Farms to encourage all Marylanders to enjoy fresh, delicious ice cream. The Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail includes eight farms that stretch over more than 290 miles from Ocean City in the east to Washington County in the west. For more information. [For more information.](#)

[Read all press releases.](#)

### Facebook: What are we Talking About?

*We update our [Facebook](#) page several times a week. Some recent posts are shown below.*

- Most popular post: Eastern Equine Encephalitis has been detected in Maryland. [See it here.](#)
- Second most popular post: The only corn cannery east of the Mississippi is on the Eastern Shore. [See it here.](#)
- Other posts include several photos from the Maryland Association of Counties

Conference, photos of ice cream trail visits and watermelon promotions.

[Follow and Like us on Facebook!](#)

### MDA In Pictures

MDA's [Flickr](#) account has photos of MDA events while our [YouTube](#) playlists have videos about various agricultural topics.

New YouTube Video Released: MDA working with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene produce a pair of 4-minute videos.

1. *Don't Get Bitten: Avoid Breeding Mosquitoes in Your Back Yard.* [View here.](#)
2. *Don't Go Viral: Avoid West Nile Virus.* [View here.](#)

### Follow Us on Social Media

**On Twitter:** MDA has several twitter feeds you can follow for quick updates. We hope you'll follow us.

- [@MdAgDept](#) - the official twitter account of the Maryland Department of Agriculture
- [@MdsBest](#) - the twitter feed for MDA's Marketing Office and the Maryland's Best Program
- [@MdEquines](#) - the twitter feed for MDA's Maryland Horse Industry Board
- [@MdFarm2School](#) - the twitter for MDA's Farm to School Program
- [@MDGypsyMoth](#) - the twitter feed for MDA's Forest Pest Management during gypsy moth spraying season. (It is not currently tweeting but will be soon.)

**On Facebook:** MDA has several Facebook pages we invite you to "like."

- [MDA's Official Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland's Best Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland Farm to School Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland Young Farmers Advisory Board Facebook page](#)

**We invite your feedback**

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We are always looking for ways to improve how we serve our constituents. Please send your comments, suggestions and ideas to [mda.news@maryland.gov](mailto:mda.news@maryland.gov) or call 410-841-5881. Or contact:

- Julie Oberg, Communications Director, 410-841-5888, [julie.oberg@maryland.gov](mailto:julie.oberg@maryland.gov)
- Vanessa Orlando, Public Information Officer, 410-841-889, [vanessa.orlando@maryland.gov](mailto:vanessa.orlando@maryland.gov)

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